

A Study of 9th Grade Students' Perception Regarding School Climate

Roopa Vats

Assistant Professor, Guru Nanak College of Education, Punjabi Bagh, New Delhi, India

ABSTRACT

The Present Study was focused on study of perception of school climate among students of 9th grade. This study helped to understand the feelings of students' regarding the school environment where they spend five to six hours per day. School climate is the quality and attributes of a school. It includes school's rules and regulation, norms, behavior, support system, expectations etc. Everything that is a part of school environment, which eventually plays an important role in shaping the overall personality of children, falls under the category of school climate. The subject of the research concerns the perception of school climate among 9th grade students of North – West zone in Delhi. This study was conducted on 120 students (60 each from both schools). Students' perception regarding school climate was studied using 'The School Climate Scale' developed by Dr. Shivender Pratap Singh & Dr. Ali Imam. This climate scale consists of 18 statements of on five point scale namely strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree and strongly disagree ranging from 5 points to 1 point respectively. The responded respond on the various aspects of climate in school such as freedom, cooperation, motivation, enjoyment of schooling, discipline, health and hygiene, fee structure, equal opportunities, support of faculty and administration. The findings of the study indicates that majority of students have fairly good and satisfactory level of perception regarding the climate of school. In addition it was found that teacher's and faculty support, discipline, opportunities provide a positive impact on students. In addition to this it was found that 9th grade Government and Private school students have different perceptions about the school climate. On the other hand, on the basis of mean values, it was observed that private school students have significantly better perception towards school climate in comparison to their government school counterparts.

Keywords : Students' Perception, School Climate

I. INTRODUCTION

Many educational researches concluded that the perception of students' about the school influenced their self-perception and self-esteem and their behavior in school. Students may have positive or negative perception about school. This becomes more evident problem when students have negative perception regarding school and school climate. Generally those students who have negative perception about school climate dislike the school

and more likely to have low attendance in school which leads to the low academic achievement.

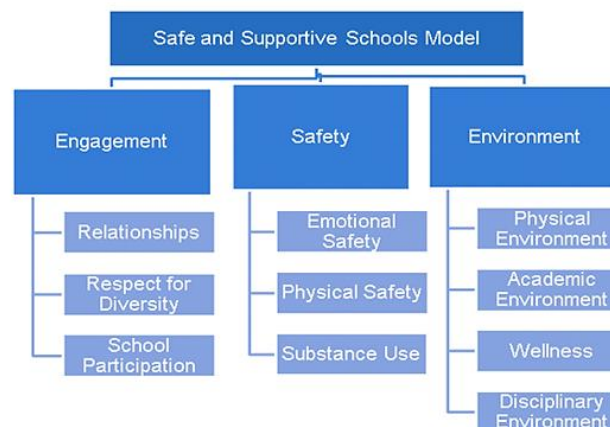
School, thus, plays an important role in the life of learners. School is the instrument for creating an environment for building positive self-concept and self-identity among students. Researchers have suggested that school climate affects the behavior of students and helps in shaping their personality. School climate may have positive or adverse effect on students' behavior. Various characteristics of school climate such as rewarding and punishing students for

their behavior, taking students' needs into consideration while making school norms, good classroom management for group activity, positive leadership style etc gave positive outcome like good and regular attendance and high academic achievement among students.

"**School climate** refers to the quality and consistency of interpersonal interactions within the school community that influence children's cognitive, social, and psychological School Climate development. These interactions include those among staff, between staff and students, among students, and between home and school" (Haynes, Emmons, & Ben-Avie, 1997). Thus, school climate include the interactions between different stakeholders of the educational field such among both staff and students, between staff and students, and between home and school. A school's climate can define the quality of a school that creates healthy learning places; nurtures children's and parents' dreams and aspirations, stimulates teachers' creativity and enthusiasm, and elevates all of its members (Freiberg, 1999). Thus school climate is the part of School culture which is a broader term that indicates the underground stream of norms, values, beliefs, traditions, and rituals that have built up over time as people work together, solve problems, and confronts challenges. School culture is a set of informal expectations and values that shapes how people think, feel, and act in schools (Peterson & Deal, 1998).

• **Components of school climate**

According to the Safe and Supportive Schools Model developed by National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments, the school Climate involves three components namely safety, engagement and environment.



(Source: <https://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/safe-and-healthy-students/school-climate>)

- **Engagement:** There should be strong and healthy relationship among every individual who in any form a part of school such as students, teachers, administration, parents, guardians or community. Feeling of oneness among all the participants of school climate should be there. Respect for each other's opinion irrespective of their caste, class, religion and gender and everyone should be involved and participate in school activities.
- **Safety:** School environment as well as school activities should be safe physically and emotionally for each and every child in the school. There should be no harassment, bullying including cyber bullying and victimization etc. as these create non healthy environment in the school.
- **Environment:** The environment of school includes a variety of factors such as the physical environment, instructional environment, student wellness, and discipline practices. Positive school climate leads to higher academic and behavioral outcomes of students.

• **TYPES OF SCHOOL CLIMATE**

Dr. Shivender Pratap Singh & Dr. Ali Imam divided School climate in 6 types namely open, autonomous,

controlled, paternal, familiar and closed. They described school climate is being given below:

1. Open climate

An open climate is that climate which depicts openness and supportive environment and promote healthy interaction among the principal, teachers, pupils and parents. Hoy and Sabo (1998) described that an open climate reflects the principal and teachers cooperative, supportive and receptive attitudes to each other's ideas and their commitment to work. The principal, according to these researchers, shows genuine concerns for teachers; he/she motivates and encourages staff members. He/she gives the staff freedom to carry out their duties in the best way they know. Also in a school characterized with open climate, teachers are portrayed as tolerant, helpful and respectful professionals. They are caring and willing to assist students when need to be. Teachers work hard so that pupils succeed. They care, respect and help another as colleagues and even at personal level. As a team they work for the success of pupils. Both the principal and teachers are accessible and approachable. They maintain close relationship with pupils and parents. Hoy and Tarter's (1997) findings reveal that high supportive principal behavior, low directive principal behavior, high engaged teacher behavior, and very low frustrated teacher behavior are attributes of an open/healthy organizational climate.

2. Autonomous climate

This type of climate portrays an atmosphere where teachers are given a good measure of freedom to operate in the school. The principal models enthusiasm and diligence. Both teachers and pupils are happy. There is no external threat or influence. Teachers have great desire to work and pupils are highly motivated to learn. There is a close

relationship among the principal, teachers, pupils and parents (Halpin 1966)

3. Controlled climate

Hard work is the major characteristics of controlled climate. Even through the principal does not commitment; hard work is over emphasis to the extent that little or no time is given to social life. Nonetheless, teachers are committed to their work and spend considerable time on paper work. Thus in the most cases, there is little time to interact with one another. Pupils are also hard working, but are given little time to participate in extracurricular activities. The principals often employs a direct approach keeps his/her distance from teachers, pupils and parents in order to avoid familiarity. Parents are not encouraged to visit school with their children problems as the time on such matters could be used on something worthwhile (Silver 1983, Halpin 1966)

4. Familiar climate

Familiar climate depicts a laissez-faire atmosphere. The principal is concerned about maintaining friendly atmosphere at the expense of tasks accomplishment. Thus, a considerable percentage of teachers are not committed to their primary assignment. Some who are committed resent the way the principal runs the school; they do not share some views with the principal and their colleagues. As a result, those who are not committed form a clique because they are of the same attitude, they become friends. Most pupils do not take their studies seriously and some of them give flimsy excuses to be out of the class or absent from school. Most parents are not involved in their children's education, they are not keen to find out what their children do or not do in school. They do not think it is important to attend parents' teachers meetings. The familiarity between the principal and teachers is so much that the school work suffers (Silver 1983. Halpin 1966)

5. Paternal climate

This type of climate depicts an atmosphere where the principal is very hardworking, but has no effect on staff; to them hard work is not a popular term. There is a degree of closeness between the principal and teachers, but the principal's expectations from teachers is rather impractical. All the same, he/she is considerate and energetic, but his/her leadership approach is benevolently autocratic. As a result, most teachers, pupils and parents prefer to maintain distance from the principal. Often, pupils cannot express their difficulties or problems with boldness and parents visit the school only when it is absolutely necessary (Costley & Todd 1987).

6. Closed climate

Hoy and Sabo (1998:129) assert that closed climate represents the antithesis of the open climate. The main characteristics of this climate identified by Halpin (1966) is lack of commitment and is unproductive. There is no commitment, especially on the part of the principal and teachers. There is no emphasis on task accomplishment; rather the principal stresses routine, trivial and unnecessary paper work to which teachers minimally respond. The principal is rigid and controlling. He/she is inconsiderate, unsupportive and unresponsive. Consequently, most teachers are frustrated and ineffective. Hoy and Sabo (1998:129) add that there is lack of respect for the principal. Not only that, the teachers lack respect for and are suspicious of each other, the school authority and even the pupils. Teachers are intolerant and divided, thus there is social tension in the school.

II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

- **Urszula Dernowska (2017)** studied the school culture and climate at two selected Warsaw high junior schools, to determine teacher and student perception of school climate, the inventory

'climate in my school' (woynarowska-soldon 2006) was used. This questionnaire consisted of nine dimensions of school climate. In this study two versions of the questionnaire were used; one for teachers and one for students (school A: teachers=31, students=445; school B: teachers=34, students=402) based on a five-point scale. According to his research workplace provides good conditions for teaching and learning. Teachers showed student-friendly and safety, where teachers cooperate with students to achieve common goals. The study has empirically examined the differences in school climate perception between teachers and students. The content contains a few conclusions from a multi-faceted investigation of school culture and atmosphere at these schools. In this content, chosen categories of school atmosphere are broken down: (1) school fulfillment, (2) instructor – understudy and companion connections, (3) educators' help for understudies, (4) rousing understudies to succeed, (5) complying with the understudies' rights at school, (6) aggressive conduct among understudies.

- **Muhammed Turhan & Tülin Akgül (2017)** investigate the relationship between students' perception of school climate and their adherence to humanitarian values. To this end, the study group consisted of 1094 students in 21 secondary schools in Elazığ province of Turkey. The "School Climate Scale," developed by Çalık and Kurt, and the "Humanitarian Values Scale," developed by Dilmaç, were used to collect data. The findings of the study indicated that female students have a higher level of adherence to humanitarian values. In addition, it was found that school activities towards values education have a significant effect on adherence to humanitarian values. It was concluded that teacher support, success orientation and safe learning environment-

positive peer interactions, which are important components of positive school climate, positively affect adolescents' adherence to humanitarian values.

- **Gulnaz Zahid (2017)** aimed at investigating and comparing the direct and indirect impact of children's perceptions of school climate upon their academic performance and socio emotional adjustment. A model was developed in which children's perception of school climate was considered as the independent variable and student academic performance and socio emotional adjustment as the dependent variables. Within this model, three mediating variables were selected which were children's perceptions of parental involvement, academic motivation and student academic engagement. The mediators indicate three broad categories, i.e., school, home and student-specific variables, which facilitate comparing the significance of their role in the model. Data was collected from 324 students from Grades 7 and 9 and only the complete data from 268 cases (girls=126, boys=142) was analyzed. Two independent models were tested through path analysis. Findings revealed differential roles of the selected mediators for the student outcomes. This study presents a significantly useful model to understand the impact of school climate and provides baseline information for the implementation of the National Education Policy (2009), which focuses upon the improvement of learning environment of the schools.
- **Anurupa Kundu & Debdulal Dutta Roy (2016)** worked on Teacher's Innovative behavior towards School Climate. The sample for the study consisted of 400 school teachers from 28 schools of Kolkata and adjoining areas (West Bengal, India). They were administered the following measures: a) Innovative Work behavior Scale

(Jansen, 2000), b) School Climate Perception Scale (Johnson, Stevens and Zvoch, 2007). Correlation and Regression Analysis were used to examine the dynamics of relationship between school climate perception and innovative work behavior. Results of regression analysis revealed that instructional innovation, student relation and collaboration were the significant predictors of innovative work behavior. This study is a noteworthy contribution towards understanding the school climate factors that are important for innovative work behavior of school teachers.

- **Swaha Bhattacharya & Monimala Mukherjee (2011)** worked on the 'Study on school teachers of CBSE and ICSE board regarding School Climate and their involvement in job. The point of the examination is to ponder the school atmosphere and employment association as saw by the teachers of CBSE and ICSE board crosswise over Kolkata. As needs be, a gathering of 80 teachers (40 from CBSE and 40 from ICSE board) were chosen as test in this examination. General Information Schedule, Perceived School Climate Poll and Perceived Job Involvement Questionnaire were regulated to them by giving legitimate direction. The discoveries uncovered that school atmosphere as seen by the educators of ICSE Board is nearly superior to that of the CBSE Board. The same is valid for work contribution too. At the point when correlation was made between the instructors of CBSE and ICSE Board in terms of apparent employment contribution, noteworthy distinction was watched.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

For conducting this research, the researcher selected descriptive research method. Through descriptive research the researcher tried to describe the

perception of selected sample regarding school climate. This is an attempt to analyze and interpret the perception of students about the various aspects of school climate.

• **Population and Sample**

Population is the totality of all the subjects or members of the same category which is subjected to observe or study. Sampling is the small portion of population which is selected for the observation and analysis. Thus, keeping this in view a total sample of 120 students of 9th grade of two schools of North West Delhi was selected through random sampling technique.

• **Title**

“A Study of 9th Grade Students’ Perception regarding School Climate”

• **Objectives**

- i. To assess 9th grade students’ perception on school climate
- ii. To study relationship between Government and private school 9th grade students’ perception on school climate

• **Research Hypothesis**

There is no significant relationship between Government and private school 9th grade students’ on school perception

• **Tool used**

School Climate scale (SCS) by Dr. Shivendra Pratap Singh and Dr. Ali Imam

IV. METHODS AND MATERIAL

School Climate scale (SCS) developed by Dr. Shivendra Pratap Singh and Dr. Ali Imam consists of 18 test item statements and all the items are positive type. This scale is 5- point likert type representing

various aspects of climate in school viz. freedom, cooperation, motivation, enjoyment of schooling, discipline, health and hygiene, fee structure, equal opportunities, support of faculty and administration.

School Climate Dimension	Item Number
Freedom & cooperation	2,4
Motivation & enjoyment in School	1, 3, 8, 12, 14, 17
Discipline	7, 11
Health & hygiene	9, 15
Fee structure	10
Equal opportunity	6,13,16
Support of Faculty & administration	5, 18

Reliability: It is the most fundamental quality which any measuring instrument should possess. Split half method was employed. A split half reliability coefficient was found by correlating scores of the subjects on odd items of the form with their scores on even items. The reliability was calculated by using the scores of 200 students on the 18 items of the final SCS test. The correlation coefficient thus, obtained was 0.89 which when correlated by spearman- brown prophecy formula increased to 0.92.

Validity: Content validity of items was ensured through rational analysis of the administrators and experts in the questionnaire construction. Correlation between total scores and item scores were also used for validity. This approach assumes that the total score was valid; thus the extent to which the item correlation with the total score was indicative of construct validity for the scale.

V. INTERPRETATION AND ANALYSIS

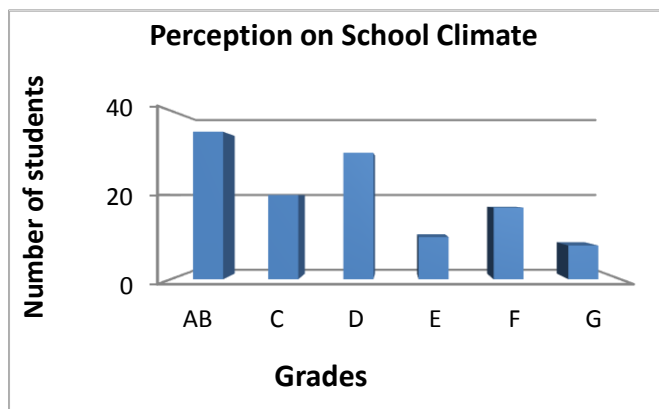
Objective 1 : To assess 9th grade students’ perception on school climate

Table 1.

Raw Score	Number of Students	Grade
78-90	35	A,B
66-78	20	C
54-66	30	D
42-54	10	E
30-42	17	F
18-30	08	G

Following grades represents the student perception about school climate.

- Grade A= Extremely favorable(EF)
- Grade B = Highly favorable(HF)
- Grade C = Above Average Favorable (AAF)
- Grade D= Average Favorable(AF)
- Grade E = Below Average Favorable (BAF)
- Grade F = Highly Unfavorable(HU)
- Grade G = Extremely Unfavorable(EU)



Interpretation: The above table revealed that maximum students have above average favorable perception about school climate. 35 students lie in A, B grade that means they have extremely and highly favorable perception about school climate. Few

students (8) lie in G grade i.e. they have extremely unfavorable perception about school climate. Thus, we can conclude that majority of students have fairly good and satisfactory level of perception regarding the climate of school.

- **Objective 2 :** To study relationship between Government and private school 9th grade students’ perception on school climate

Table 2

Variables	N	Mean	r- value	Level of significance	Remarks
Govt. School Students	60	64.266	-0.142	0.279 at 0.05	Negative correlation
Private School Students	60	74.666			

The above table revealed that the relationship between the perception of 9th grade students in government and private school is negatively correlated. The calculated ‘r’ is -0.1418 which is less than the critical value of correlation i.e. 0.279 at 0.05 level of significance. So, the hypothesis “There is no significant relationship between Government and private school 9th grade students’ perception on school climate” is rejected. This result shows that there is a negative correlation between the perception of students of Government and private schools. It can be concluded that 9th grade Government and Private school students have different perceptions about the school climate. On the other hand, on the basis of mean values (Government: 64.66 and Private: 74.66), it can be said that private school students have significantly better perception towards school climate in comparison to their government school counterparts.

VI. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

School climate especially positive school climate enhance the quality of school. When the school climate is positive, students become energetic to learn and participate in various activities of the school with the full zeal. The study reveals the perception of 9th grade students towards their school climate. The result shows that maximum number of students has above Average Favorable (AF) level of perception about the school climate. Less number of students lies in Extremely Unfavorable (EU) category of perception of School Climate.

The results also indicate that Private school students have better perception about their school climate in comparison to Government school students. It may be so because students studying in Private schools may have better facilities of learning than the students studying in Government Schools.

A positive school climate helps in building the positive personality of the student. Perception of school climate also influences student's behavior and emotional status. Developing positive attitude towards school climate is valuable for overall development of personality. The present education system is student centered. The quality of instruction being plays a great role in the development of a positive school climate. The curriculum framed must be useful from the practical point of view. The behavior and the attitude of the teacher towards students play a significant role in framing attitude towards school climate. The way in which a teacher encourages the students for the active participation in classroom activities and in making decisions for life also affects attitude towards school climate. The role of the teacher is not limited to as an instructor rather he/she is a guide, friend or a philosopher. Teacher represents the natural complexity of the real world.

Teacher must have a caring attitude towards the class. He/she must possess a quality that not only makes him a good instructor but also a mentor and an asset for the society.

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